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**THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Application of: Cobb et al.

Application No.: 09/686,346

Group Art Unit: 1652

Filed: October 10, 2000

Examiner: M. Monshipouri

For: TAO PROTEIN KINASE POLYPEPTIDES  
AND METHODS OF USE THEREOF

Attorney Docket No.: 10624-026-999

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE TO  
RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 121**

TECH CENTER 1600/2900

MAY 28 2002

RECEIVED

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

In response to the Office Action mailed February 21, 2002, please consider the amendments and remarks below. Also submitted herewith are: (a) a Petition to Extend Time accompanied by the required fee; (b) Fee Transmittal Sheet; and (c) a copy of the claims as pending in the present application after entry of the present amendment as Appendix A.

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please cancel claims 1-27 without prejudice.

Please add new claims 28-48 to read as follows:

28. A method for screening for a modulator of MAP kinase signal transduction comprising:

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- (a) contacting a TAO polypeptide or variant thereof with an agent;
  - (b) incubating said contacted TAO with a MEK polypeptide; and
  - (c) determining the level of MEK activation,

wherein detecting a change in the level of MEK activation relative to a MEK incubated with a TAO polypeptide not contacted with said agent indicates that said agent is a modulator.